

## M'Tucci's Italian

### One of the best Italian restaurants in New Mexico



**Twelfth Visit: April 30, 2016**

**First Visit: February 19, 2015**

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There are many Italian restaurants in The Duke City, but few can touch M'Tucci's Italian for brilliance. This is the flagship of the M'Tucci's empire, which consists of an Italian Market and Dali (I've eaten there 46 times so far), a Cocina/Grill at the NHCC, and a catering business.

This is not a red-sauce-pasta house, and it is not a Northern Italian (Piedmont) place. It is a modern American Italian place, and as such, it excels at presenting the unusual but amazing dishes you won't find anywhere else. The owners, Katie Gardner and Jeff Spiegel (he's the one in the Hawaiian shirt), and the highly talented chef and GM, John Haas, have created an institution that is unique. And I love it. It has earned a place on my coveted [Top Ten List](#).

### Brunch and Lunch

Sunday brunch is not to be missed. Most restaurants servr Eggs Benedict, but none like this.



eggs Benedict eggplant

### **Eggs Benedict**

This excellent verso of Eggs Benedict does not sit on an English muffin. Rather, it sits on a lightly breaded slice of eggplant that has been gently fried to a tender crispiness while the interior is soft and runny like melted cheese. The egg yolks are perfectly runny. Good home fries with gently caramelized onions complete this dish.

This dish appears on my [Best Dishes of 2016 List](#).



Tuna Tacos

### **Blackened Tuna Tacos**

Blackened Ahi Tuna, Kale-Apple Slaw, Pickled Jalapenos, Chipotle Aioli

My friend Jack Reynolds had these and was quite pleased. The side salad was nicely dressed with a tasty vinaigrette.



Pork Belly Tacos

### **Pork Belly Tacos**

Crispy Duroc Pork Belly, Roasted Tomato Vinaigrette, Green Apple, Pickled Red Onion, Local Feta

I am a pork belly freak. These were among the best I have ever had. Lovely blend of ingredients. I want these again.

### **Dinners and Extras**

Here is where John Haas really shines. Listen carefully as your server rates the daily specials. I rarely order from the menu. The specials are amazing.



Espresso Martini



Chocolate Martini

The wine list has most anything you might want. The bartender creates very fine (and sometimes unusual) drinks. Try the **Chocolate Martini** and the **Espresso Martini**. Ask your server about the [Shrubs](#). These sweet martinis are fabulous. Google the recipes.

Both surprised me, and I will continue to order them from time to time. I an a Bombay Sapphire extra dry with a twist guy.



Pappardelle and Salsiccia

salsiccia

### **Pappardelle con Salsiccia**

Pappardelle, house-made sausage, kale, and a white wine-chicken stock sauce, and lemon zest.

This great dish is no longer on the menu, bi John will make it for me anytime.

The sausage is available at [M'Tucci's Market and Deli](#). I make this at home for guests visiting [Casa de la Vieja Escuela Mariscos](#). Chicken stock, white wine, and lemon zest (adds brightness).



Grilled Salmon

### **Grilled Salmon**

Wild Salmon, Grilled Asparagus, and Creamy Grilled Polenta

Perfectly grilled salmon with tender asparagus and a cake of grilled polenta. The polenta is slightly crispy on the outside, and the inside is soft and creamy. Never dry.

This dish has become a favorite of several of my gastronome friends. Rightfully so.



Hanger Steak

### **Hanger Steak**

Herb Marinated, Grilled Asparagus, Mashed Potatoes, Balsamic Reduction, Grilled Lemon

Perfectly grilled medium rare. Tasty and tender. The asparagus is always amazing here. Tender and never stringy. This also is a favorite of several of my friends, including Dazzling Deanell's brother Darren.



Risotto

**RISOTTO CARNAROLI DE PESCE with**

Aged Carnaroli Rice, Cooked with Fresh Mussels, Sauteed Shrimp, Fresh Fish of the Day, Saffron, Tomatoes, and Basil

This is a beautifully prepared risotto. The fresh mussels are tender, juicy, and tasty. The texture of the rice could no be better. This dish kept my friend Pam from talking (nearly impossible). She finally came up for air when the dish ws nearly gone. It's that good.



Pork Shank

**Pork Shank**

Braised pork shank in a creamy sauce with sauteed greens

Whenever I can, I order Lamb Shanks in Italian and Greek restaurants. This was my first try at pork shanks. Delicious. Perfect appearance, taste, and texture. Slow cooked to the almost-falling-off-the-bone doneness, they are a big hit with me.



I had this dish two times in a row. Not on the current menu (they were a special), ask for them in advance. Get lucky.

## **Desserts and Fun Stuff**

### **Chocolate Mousse**



Linda's Birthday Mousse  
The sparklers are free

## Fried Twinkie



Darren's Birthday Fried Twinkie  
Sounds disgusting, but it's not.  
At least, that's what Darren says



## Larry's Albuquerque Food Musings

Everything Tastes Better Here

<http://www.abqtopten.com/blog>

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## What others are saying

[Gil Garduño](#)—*New Mexico's Sesquipedalian Sybarite*



Jeff Spiegel & Katie Gardner  
Owners and Operators

“Katie Gardner and her husband Jeff Spiegel moved to Albuquerque, his hometown, in 2007. Eventually they started to miss the hustle and bustle of the restaurant business and launched M’Tucci’s Kitchina in July, 2013. The “M’Tucci” in the restaurant’s name is in honor of Richard Matteucci, a friend of Jeff’s. A framed black-and-white photo of Jeff, Richard and an unidentified frolicker celebrating a (very) good time hangs among the bric-a-brac. You’ve got to love an owner who shares in his fun.



John Haas Chief Magician

“The visionary behind the menu is John Hass, executive chef and member of the restaurant’s ownership triumvirate. John’s interpretation of traditional foods often involves their deconstruction, refining and reinvention. You’ll still recognize the traditional dishes with which you’ve grown up, but they might not be exactly as you John is already so highly regarded that he was named “best chef” runner up in the [Alibi](#)’s Best of Burque Restaurants 2013. Traditional items he prepares might not be exactly as you may remember them. They’ll be better! The ricotta stuffed cannelloni dish, for example includes both marinara sauce and New Mexico red chile which is why it’s sub-titled “Enchiladas Italianas” on the menu.”

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Mon	11 AM to 10 PM
Tue	11 AM to 10 PM
Wed	11 AM to 10 PM
Thu	11 AM to 10 PM
Fri	11 AM to 11 PM
<b>Sat</b>	<b>11 AM to 11 PM</b>
Sun	11 AM to 9 PM

**(505) 503-7327**

Table reservation recommended

### [Paradise Hills](#)

6001 Winter Haven Road

Albuquerque, NM [87120](#)

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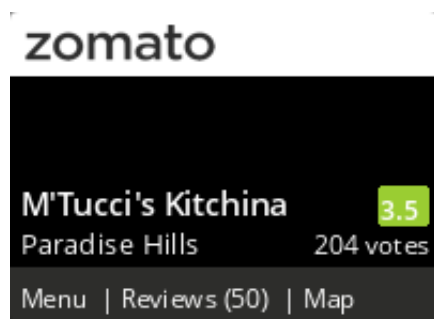


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